

UNOFFICIAL MINUTES

Regular Meeting

The Mayor and City Council met in regular session on Tuesday August 19, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. in the G. Thomas Love Boardroom at the Greeneville Energy Building with Mayor C. Calvin Doty presiding.

Present were Council Members Ginny Kidwell, Matt Hensley, Tim Teague, Tim Ward, and Todd Smith, City Manager.

At this time, Mayor Doty's comments are as follows: 1) A joint proclamation by Greeneville Mayor Cal Doty and Greene County Mayor Kevin Morrison was read recognizing September 11, 2025 as Patriot Day in Greeneville and Greene County; 2) Bryan Harrison, a twenty-six (26) year employee of the Town of Greeneville in the Fire Department was presented a plaque by Patsy Fuller, Human Resources Director, in recognition of his retirement; 3) The GMC Truck Fair that was held last weekend was successful with approximately one hundred fifty (150) trucks at the event; and 4) the Depot Street After Party was also successful this past weekend.

Seven individuals have requested to make public comment on item 8.1 – Consideration to request the resignation from City Manager, Todd Smith. Those comments are included with the corresponding agenda item.

Motion by Council Member Hensley, seconded by Council Member Kidwell to approve the minutes from the regularly scheduled meeting held on Tuesday, August 5, 2025. Motion passed unanimously.

At this time, Mayor Doty initiated the discussion regarding the request of the resignation of City Manager, Todd Smith with the following statement: “When I ran for the office of Mayor in 2022, I ran on a simple idea: Moving our community forward, which means improving relationships, breaking away from the mindset of “that’s the way we’ve always done it”, and looking for new, innovative ways to make our Town better. People have responded to these ideas. One of the concerns I heard most often was the need for a change in leadership at Town Hall. Many voters asked me to take a serious look at the City Manager’s office. With more than forty (40) years of business experience, I believed I could help bring in new ideas and new ways of operating. In my first term, I focused on learning, spent time listening to our people, studying our practices, and offering guidance where I could. We had some successes; but I continued to hear from both citizens and employees that stronger direction was needed at the City Manager Level. One of the projects that highlighted this concern was the Depot Street Project. Over and over, I was asked “Who is in charge of the project?” After digging in, I realized that the answer was troubling that no one from the city was managing it. Instead, the engineering company that designed the project was running it. That lack of oversight has caused real problems. For example, we had lights that are down on Depot Street that are taller than the 12-foot lights in other parts of the remainder of our Town. When asked why, there was no explanation other than “that’s just what they did.” Two years after the grand opening, the project is still unfinished, sidewalks concerns remain unresolved, and we have no designs or clear plans for the next steps. Relationships are another area where we must do better. Our town cannot grow in isolation. We must work with the County and other surrounding communities. In the past, we only went to County Commission meetings when we wanted money or funding. I have started attending the

meetings because we should be at the table all the time, building partnerships and offering to help, not just asking for help. These are just a few issues that I feel are holding us back. There are other activities the City Council has asked to move forward on. But they remain unfinished. As Mayor and City Council Members, we are part-time leaders. Our responsibility is to provide direction, vision, and accountability. What our community needs most is simple: ideas, best practices, innovation, and a commitment to doing things better. Expectations, accountability, and transparency are not optional – they are the hallmarks of a strong, vibrant, and healthy community. That is the standard we must hold ourselves to and the commitment I will continue to bring as your Mayor. This is why I am asking for Mr. Smith to resign from the City Manager position.”

At this time, Mayor Doty reviewed the public comment policy.

At this time, Mayor Doty opened floor for public comment. The following individuals spoke on this item: 1) Amy Hutcherson questioned the process of Town operations, in particular the evaluation process and asked why isn't the City Council ultimately responsible for all of the issues, such as Depot Street; 2) Stacy Ward stated he is frustrated with businesses that are coming in to the Town of Greeneville, which do not fit with our area and that leadership has failed to be innovative; 3) Nancy Laughlin stated that she had reached out to Mr. Smith to assist her with a personal situation, stating this was a probate matter and there was nothing he could do for he and should not be the City Manager; 4) Christina Potts spoke in support of the City Manager, outlining his love for the job, his empowerment of employees, and his service with purpose to the Town and its citizens; 5) Lora Young stated if this action was approved, all employees of the Town would be affected in a negative manner and that Mr. Smith should remain the City Manager; 6) Patsy Fuller stated her support of keeping Mr. Smith as City Manager due to his influence and leadership to our employees and citizens; and 7) Joan Stover stated that there are many citizens with questions about this action, stating she has reviewed the charter and the responsibilities of both the Mayor and the City Manager and strongly objects to the request for resignation of the City Manager, Mr. Smith.

At this time, Council Member Kidwell responded with the following statement: “Ms. Hutcherson was the first speaker. Mayor, the buck stops here. Todd carries out the will of us. It is our responsibility. No matter who is sitting here, it is this council that ultimately makes the decisions. I think we have done our community and our city manager an injustice by not evaluating him every year as it was stated. He should be evaluated every year. And, you mentioned you met with him every Monday. I never got a read-out from those meetings. I never knew what those concerns were. I heard on the street that he had been asked to resign. We all need to look at ourselves and see what we can do to make sure we do not put on a public spectacle like this. We need to get our house in order all the way from the top. I accept full responsibility for many of these derelictions of duty.”

At this time, Council Member Ward declined comment.

At this time, Council Member Teague responded with the following statement: “Thank you to all the speakers. This smacked me “right upside of the head,” like it did for some of you in the audience. Cal, I wished you had come to me with your concerns about Todd. Never heard of

them and never knew that. I appreciate you bringing those up now. As far as I know – Todd, have you have never had an evaluation? Todd responded that he had had one in 2013, which was a year into the job. I think that was up to this board and the mayor – this mayor and the previous mayor – to facilitate that to you. That is what I read in our charter and come to an agreement on how to do that. Since you have never had one, Todd, how would you know that these things were going on in the Mayor’s mind? I have questions about that. I will pass at this point.”

At this time, Council Member Hensley responded with the following statement: Council Member Matt Hensley: “So, I would like to address two (2) things:

- 1) First, the perceived impulsiveness of this entire situation, why we are here. We are having a public meeting to address this agenda item at the request of Mr. Smith. He sent an email to the city council (this is public record) letting us know that if we had issues with his performance, we would have to bring this up in a public meeting. Here we are.
- 2) Second, the issue of the performance evaluation. When I was elected to office a little over a year ago, we had a city council retreat where MTAS had training for all of us. During that retreat, Mr. Smith brought up his request to have an evaluation done. We all discussed it at that meeting. We were under the impression when we left the meeting that Mr. Smith would initiate that process with the management consultant from MTAS, who spoke to us about the evaluation process. We have not received anything. From that meeting on, that was the last that we heard about doing a formal evaluation process. When we talk about evaluating city managers, you have heard me mention MTAS, which stands for Municipal Technical Advisory Service. The management consultant that spoke with us at the retreat mentioned there is an actual evaluation rubric and criteria that each of the city council members would complete individually, after which they would be shared with the Mayor who then could either share it with the city manager one-on-one or in a public meeting like this. There are variations of ways that is handled. Again, after that meeting, we were never approached about the evaluation process. We do not have a formal process in place in writing on how we evaluate city managers. I do not want anyone in attendance or watching live to think we are trying to go around the protocols because there is not a formal protocol in place. MTAS has that resource. I am still waiting on the email for my formal input. He (Todd) meets with all of us one-on-one, or at least he has met with me one-on-one. I have aired grievances not only of my own volition, but also of citizens of this community. Todd, I do not question your character one bit. It is clear that Town employees think you are doing a great job from that standpoint. That is your job to create that environment. My job is to represent the citizens of the community of Greeneville, Tennessee. They have differing thoughts on your performance. Again, I have no formal tool to deliver those concerns. I have my own concerns that should not come as shock to you. That is where I am coming from.

Over the last 2 weeks, I have combed through 30 or 40 responses that have been received via email, telephone, or in public. A quote that came to my mind as I prepared for this particular situation.

The first is from former Senator, Howard Baker, “the power of collaboration is far greater than our individual efforts,” which reminded me of a quote by MLK, “leaders don’t search for consensus, they mold it.” Two (2) primary issues that have come from citizens and that I had personal issue with, as well. First and foremost, the perceived impulsiveness of how funding was discussed and delivered to our Greene County Partnership. That to me was not handled in an appropriate and professional manner. It literally turned our community upside down. It did. I expressed those concerns to you and pleaded with you to reconsider that recommendation based off of community input from our constituents. You do not axe funding of the community’s sole economic development and tourism entity. But, the real concerning part of that for me was the fact that decision not only was made (in my opinion) without the regard or potential implications it would have on our county and other neighboring community colleagues, there was not a cohesive plan of how ECD and tourism would be handled if absorbed under the Town. That, in my opinion, was very risky. And, that has only fueled the divisiveness in our community right now. I stand on the foundation of collaboration and wanting to work with our community. The second piece I have is that we talk about visionary leadership moving forward. A couple of meetings ago, it was shared with us how we are going to handle our strategic planning for our community. You outlined your process for how that would go, and it involved creating and disseminating a survey. Nowhere in that plan did you refer to or bring up the work and the input of the citizens of Greeneville within the livability committee study, the ten-year master plan for parks and recreation, a customer service satisfaction survey that was recently shared with us, and something near and dear to my heart was the 20-year comprehensive plan that I worked on with the building, planning and zoning departments. None of those documents were brought up. What was alarming to me is that when we talk about moving forward, you have heard input from the community, and you have heard input from groups you have mobilized that have put in the hard work to produce a document. We should be looking at implementation or execution. Instead, it felt like we had started back at square one to collect data when we already have the data as a starting point. Those are my two biggest concerns right now. I do want to make sure for the record that I do not question your character as an individual. And, I appreciate your service. I have no doubt that you manage and execute the administration of the internal parts of the Town well. But I also know my role as a city council member is to speak for the citizens of Greeneville, and there is some serious concern.”

At this time, Todd Smith, City Manager responded with the following statement: “Some thoughts and allegations that were brought up about my activities could be refuted, Council Member Hensley. But I do not think this is the time or place. I think there are bigger issues to talk about here. Ms. Stover was correct in going back to our founding document, the Charter of the Town of Greeneville, which is our foundation. This sets up the rules and is basically our constitution. And, over the last several weeks, I have received a lot of feedback from employees that concerns me. That feedback is that the Mayor is in departments, is talking to employees, is suggesting actions by employees, and even at times is directing employees. That concerns me. If I could just read from our Charter – the City Council and its members shall deal with the administrative services of the Town only through the City Manager, except for the purpose of

inquiry. Neither the City Council nor any member thereof shall give orders or instructions to any subordinates of the City Manager. The City Manager shall take instructions from the City Council when they are sitting in a duly convened meeting of the City Council. I should be judged by taking instructions from the City Council when they are sitting in a duly convened meeting of the City Council. That is how you judge a City Manager. I feel like there is a power play that is going on the Town of Greeneville, where the real issue is the City Manager is being the City Manager and perhaps the Mayor wants to be City Manager, as well. That deeply concerns me. Now, let me talk about what may be the real issue. I have been told by the Mayor and several employees – and other people have been told – that he (the Mayor) does not like me going to out to eat with a certain group of people a couple times a month. I go out to each for lunch every other week or so, maybe a couple of times a month, with the former Mayor, W.T. Daniels. He has told me he does not like that and told other employees he does not like that. And, he has been angry in telling me that. I think that is the real reason we are here – it is personal. We are a growing community. We are a community that has seen unprecedented growth on our commercial side and on our residential side. We have challenges to keep up with services, infrastructure, and schools. And, it seems the big concern is who the City Manager goes to lunch with every other week. We have bigger issues that this community deserves our focus on. So, I do not know how this vote will go. This may be my last city council meeting. I want to also say a couple of things. It has been my greatest honor to serve the citizens here. When I get those phone calls from citizens and they have an issue or problem, and we can take care of it with our town resources followed by a call back thanking us for assisting them – there is no greater joy I get from public service than doing that. The opportunity to serve beside this great group of employees – these public servants, who show up every single day and their focus is on how to make this community better. It has been a high professional honor to do serve with you. I thank you and appreciate it. If it is the will of the City Council for me to leave, I leave with incredible memories. In the last 13 years, this team has put transformative change in place in the Town that we will see results for generations to come. It has been a great honor to be part of that. Thank you.”

At this time, Mayor Doty responded with this statement: “I have talked to Todd about meeting with former Mayor Daniels. I tried to talk to him explaining that there are many people in our Town that do not feel comfortable with him doing that because of the perception there is a second government running our Town. I thought it would hurt him in the job. I was trying to provide discussions that I thought would help him. I was trying to do what I could for the Town. I do live here, and I love this Town. I am trying to invest in our downtown area. I am happy with the new businesses that have come into our Town. There are new people coming into our Town. It is a great place. Todd is a good man. I just think it is time for a change.”

At this time, Mayor Doty called for a motion to request the resignation of City Manager Todd Smith.

Motion by Council Member Hensley, seconded by Council Member Ward to request the resignation of the City Manager, Todd Smith. Lora Young, Finance Director and Town Recorder, asked for a roll call vote on the motion is as follows: Council Member Hensley voted aye; Council

Member Teague voted nay; Council Member Ward voted aye; and Council Member Kidwell voted nay. Per the Town's charter, in the event of a tie vote the Mayor is to cast the tiebreaking vote. Mayor Doty voted aye. Motion passed with a 3-2 vote.

At this time, Mr. Smith requested clarification that this action invoked his employment agreement, including severance package. Mayor Doty responded in affirmation. Mr. Smith also asked about the timeframe for his departure. Mayor Doty indicated that Mr. Smith could finish out this week.

At this time, Mr. Ron Woods, Town attorney, stated that per his contract, Mr. Smith has ten (10) days to respond with his resignation. If he chooses not to do so, a subsequent action similar in nature would be required in the following public meeting of the City Council.

At this time, Council Member Kidwell indicated that the process for a new City Manager should be transparent. We need to get counsel. She also pointed out that Council Hensley did not disclose his employment for MTAS (Municipal Technical Advisory service). Council Member Hensley indicated he was not a Management Consultant and has nothing to do with the evaluation process. Furthermore, he indicated when he serves on the Council that he is not an employee of MTAS, does not serve the Town of Greeneville in his role as the East Tennessee consultant, and requested that his employment not be discussed. Council Member Kidwell then disclosed her employment with ETSU (East Tennessee State University). Council Member Hensley responded, reiterating he is not the Town of Greeneville's consultant. Council Member Kidwell wanted clarification on qualifications for City Manager and the process of seeking a new City Manager, asking if this would be a National Search and what the process is going to involve. Mayor Doty indicated the City Council would discuss and make that decision.

At this time, Mayor Doty called for ten-minute recess.

After the recess, Mayor called the meeting back into session.

The scheduled update from the Roby Theater Committee was deferred to the next City Council meeting.

Motion by Council Member Ward, seconded by Council Member Kidwell to approve a bid for bat removal at the Roby Center in the amount of \$36,000. Nicole Rader, Roby Adult Center Director, addressed the Council stating that this project would not begin until November. This is an unbudgeted and will require a budget amendment in the General Fund. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Council Member Ward, seconded by Council Member Hensley to approve a Resolution establishing a policy for filling vacancies on Town and joint boards and commissions, effective September 1, 2025. Cathy Osborne, Assistant City Manager, addressed the Council. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Council Member Hensley, seconded by Council Member Ward to approve the policy with Council Member Kidwell's revisions outlined on pages 20-22 in the agenda packet. Motion passed unanimously.

At this time, Mayor Doty announced the following two mayoral appointments to the Greeneville Municipal Planning Commission: Brittany Hall and Samuel "Trey" Ricker III.

At this time, Mayor Doty stated Cathy Osborne, Assistant City Manager, would be in charge of the day-to-day operations of the Town. Mrs. Osborne referred to the Charter stating the decision of an interim City Manager would require a City Council vote in a public meeting.

Motion by Council Member Hensley seconded by Council Member Ward to adjourn.
Motion passed unanimously.

Attest:

C. Calvin Doty, Mayor

Lora A. Young, Recorder

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